

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

~~receiving generating, at an application server, an interactive television (iTV) application which includes an application template, programming rules, and a dynamic data file, wherein the application template specifies layout and behavior of the iTV application and refers to the programming rules for selecting content to be placed at a location within the iTV application, and wherein the programming rules select the content from the dynamic data file based on multiple selection criteria;~~

~~and an application descriptor for an iTV application, wherein the application template conforms to an authoring specification that describes a framework for the iTV application and which separates iTV application behavior from content and from business rules;~~

~~querying a data storage repository for specific content according to the application descriptor;~~

~~creating a dynamic data file configured to be populated in the application template; and storing the application template, programming rules, and the dynamic data file as separate files in a centralized application management system; and~~

~~optimizing the iTV application for delivery from the centralized application management system to one or more client devices by converting the content in the dynamic data file to a specific format displayable by a particular client device of one or more client devices; and~~

~~delivering the optimized iTV application including the application template, programming rules, and converted dynamic data file as separate files to the particular client device over a distribution network.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the iTV application comprises one or more of (a)-interactive program guides, (b)-television menus, (c)-content services, (d)-virtual channels, (e)-video on demand applications, (f)-personal video recorder applications, (g)

broadcast on demand applications, ~~(+)~~enhanced television services applications, ~~(+)~~help, ~~(+)~~customer support, ~~(+)~~self service, ~~(+)~~games, or ~~(+)~~data service applications.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 further comprising delivering the optimized iTV application to the one or more client devices in response to requests from the one or more client devices, respectively.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the iTV application conforms to authoring specification comprises an extensible markup language (XML) authoring specification.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5 wherein presentation of the content by the one or more client devices is accommodated through interpreting the application template according to the XML authoring specification.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7-1 wherein the framework for iTV application accommodates advertising, promotions, content placement packages or programming campaign definitions, so as to permit a selection of a specific advertisement, promotion or the content at a time of preparation of the iTV content, or at a time of execution of the iTV application by the one or more client devices, such selection being made according to one or more of the business programming rules.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8-1 wherein the one or more business programming rules comprise rules for placing or automating the selection of product offerings, promotions, advertising campaigns, VOD, broadcast-on-demand, transactional opportunities, or other types of content across disparate television services.

10-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9-1 wherein the ~~rules~~ for placing and/or automating product offerings accommodate multiple selection criteria chosen from the list including: include one or more of location, current channel, current channel family, current channel category, time of day, offering category, current program, current program genre, current iTV application, current content type, and subscriber profile.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9-1 wherein the ~~one or more business programming~~ rules accommodate subscriber-specific rules according to a subscriber profile associated with ~~a~~the particular one of the client device[[s]].

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14 wherein the iTV application is configured to respond in a subscriber-specific manner to user interactions with the iTV application at the one or more client devices.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8-1 wherein the ~~business programming~~ rules are selected dynamically at the time of execution of the iTV application, or at ~~the~~a time of application ~~generation~~creation.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the framework for iTV application definition accommodates ~~business~~the ~~programming~~ rules, so as to permit a selection and use of a specific ~~business~~programming rule at a time of execution of the iTV application.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the framework for iTV application definition accommodates an application profile definition, defined by a set of capabilities that correspond to a set of actions in the ~~conforms to an~~ authoring specification, which provides a

common model for provisioning, managing, deploying, advertising, commerce, layout, animation, events and navigation, dynamic data insertion, and optimization of the iTV application across different iTV operating environments.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein:

~~the receiving, querying and creating are generating of the iTV application is performed by one or more servers located at a data center;~~
~~the optimizing is performed at a cable head end distribution center; and~~
~~the centralized application management system is located remotely from the data center and cable headend the distribution center.~~

20. (New) The method of claim 19, further comprising:

delivering the generated iTV application from the data center to the application management system;
delivering the stored iTV application from the application management system to the distribution center; and
delivering the optimized iTV application from the distribution center to the particular client device over the distribution network.

21. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

generating updated programming rules;
replacing the programming rules stored on the centralized application management system with the updated programming rules; and
delivering the updated programming rules to the particular client device over the distribution network.

22. (New) A terminal comprising:

computing hardware and memory storing instructions that when executed by the computing hardware cause the terminal to perform operations including:

receiving an application template, programming rules, and a dynamic data file as separate files, which together make up an interactive television (iTV) application, wherein the application template specifies layout and behavior of the iTV application and refers to the programming rules for selecting content to be placed at a location within the iTV application, and wherein the programming rules select the content from the dynamic data file based on multiple criteria specific to the terminal; and

evaluating the template, programming rules, and dynamic data file to render the iTV application on a display.

23. (New) The terminal of claim 22, wherein the operations further include:

receiving an updated programming rules file; and

rendering the iTV application based on the updated programming rules file.